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THE ECHIDNA
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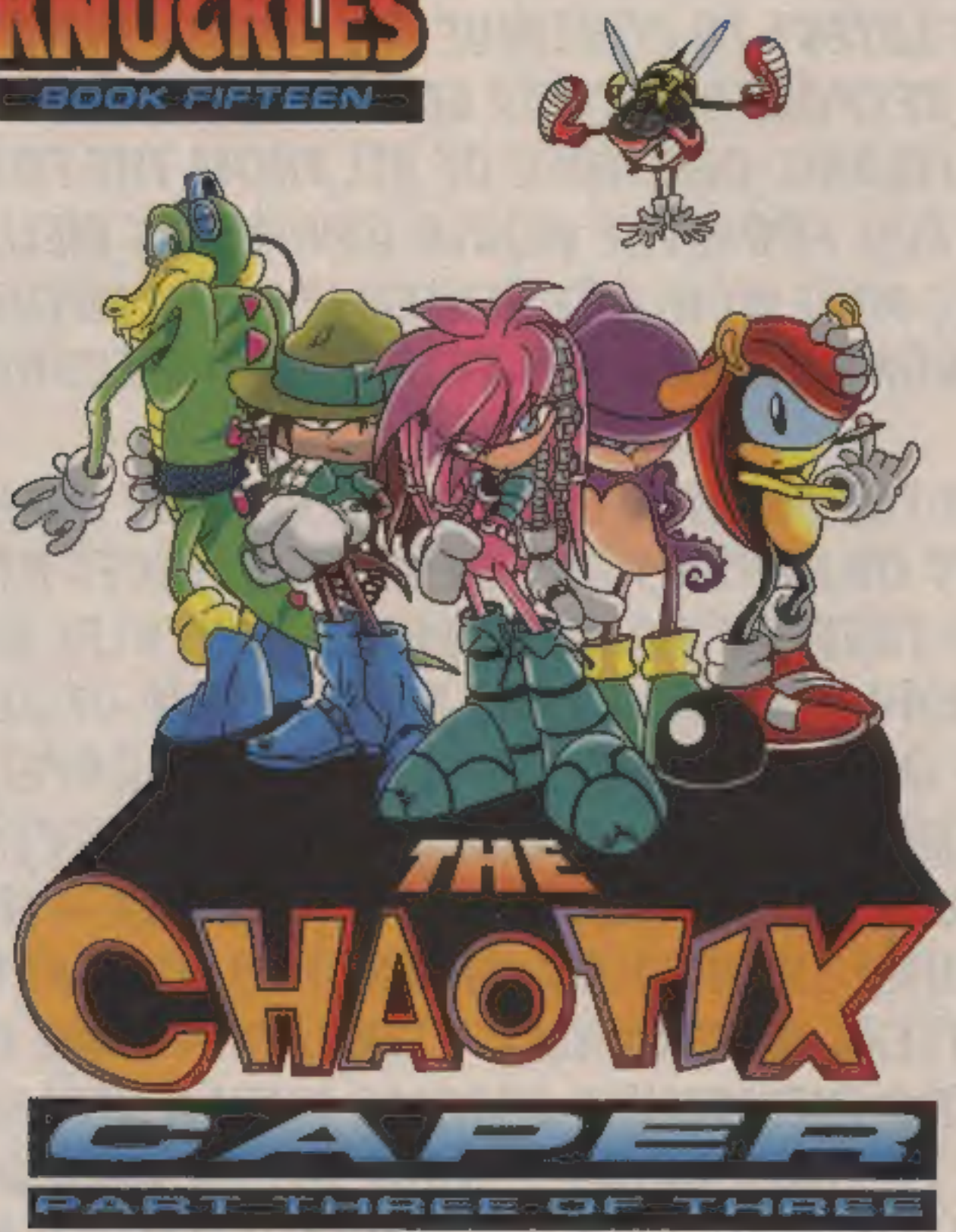
KNUCKLES™

BOOK FIFTEEN



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BORN TO THE MOST NOBLE OF ECHIDNA HOUSES, THE LATEST TO CONTINUE THE FAMILY HERITAGE AND RESPONSIBILITY AS GUARDIAN OF THE FLOATING ISLAND, DEFENDER OF ALL FROM THE FORCES OF EVIL FROM THE WORLD BEYOND AS WELL AS THOSE WHO WOULD THREATEN IT FROM WITHIN, HE IS NONE OTHER THAN KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA!

EVEN THE EMBATTLED ECHIDNA CANNOT DEFY THE LAWS OF PHYSICS AND BE IN TWO PLACES AT THE SAME TIME. AS A RESULT, WHILE KNUCKLES MAKES HIS WAY BACK FROM THE FABLED LAND OF ALBION (THE ORIGINAL HOME TO THE ECHIDNA RACE), HIS FRIENDS CHARMY, ESPIO, MIGHTY AND VECTOR — COLLECTIVELY KNOWN AS THE CHAOTIX — HAVE FOUND THEMSELVES CHARGED TO LOOK AFTER MATTERS IN KNUCKLES' STEAD. THEY HAVE ALSO FOUND THEMSELVES SADDLED WITH A NEW MEMBER TO THEIR GROUP... NONE OTHER THAN JULIE-SU, A FEMALE ECHIDNA WHOSE LOYALTIES ARE UNCERTAIN.

ALTHOUGH IT SEEMED LIKE A ROUTINE ASSIGNMENT AT THE TIME, IT WOULDN'T TAKE LONG BEFORE THINGS TOOK A TURN FOR THE WORSE...

...SO SHE'S SAYING TO ME, "BUT, DOCTOR, I HAVEN'T ANY CREDITS WITH WHICH TO PAY."
SO I REPLY—

"YOU MUST THINK I WAS BORN YESTERDAY. YOU WANT A FREEBIE—"

"...YOU GO SEE THE BUTCHER DOWN THE STREET. YOU WANT A MASTER SURGEON—"

"—YOU PAY TO GET THE BEST IN THE BUSINESS!"
THERE!
IT LOOKS LIKE THE PATIENT IS GOING TO MAKE IT.
YOU CAN CLOSE UP CHARMY, BOLLAND!

NOW, PLEASE EXCUSE ME, WHILE I CALMLY GO THROW UP!
UNGHH!

IS HE ALWAYS LIKE THIS DURING AN OPERATION?

"THIS ISN'T BAD! YOU SHOULD SEE HIM WHEN HE'S REALLY STRESSED OUT!"

HAPPY LANDINGS, KID!

C'MON, BLACKJACK!

I THINK WE BETTER MAKE TRACKS TO THE FACTORY!

AS FOR OUR FALLING FRIEND--

"--JUST BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU STEP WHEN WE HIT STREET LEVEL! HA HA HA!"

ONE CHANCE--

--TO GET THIS RIGHT!

PH-TUUUM!!

KRTCHHB

HOO BOY!

BRACE YOURSELF, GIRL!

KRAASH!
AGHHH!! BIMMY!!
ZZZZZZ
BIMMY!!! THERE'S A STRANGER IN OUR BED!!!!
ZZZZZ
NO, THERE'S NOT!
YOU'RE JUST HAVING A BAD DREAM!

CONSTABLE REMINGTON!
SHHH! YOU GO THAT WAY AND THEY'LL SEE YOU FOR SURE!
FOLLOW ME!

YOUR ROUTE DOESN'T APPEAR ANY LESS RISKIER, IF I MAY SAY SO!
THERE'S ONE NOTABLE DIFFERENCE, MISS!

THWACK!
UGHH!

HE WAS ONLY ONE! YOU WOULD'VE COME OUT THE FRONT WAY WHERE EVERYONE WAS GATHERING!
GOOD POINT!

READY FOR MORE FUN AND GAMES, HARRY?
NEVER A DULL MOMENT WITH YOU PEOPLE AROUND, IS THERE?
NEWS

NOPE!
WHERE TO?
JUST FOLLOW THAT CAR!

IS THAT ALL ?

HANG ON TO YOUR SEATS !

WHERE DO YOU SUPPOSE HE'S HEADING, CONSTABLE ?

GOOD QUESTION ! OUR FRIEND UP AHEAD WAS ABLE TO OPERATE BECAUSE WE WEREN'T PAYING ATTENTION UNTIL THINGS STARTED GETTING OUT OF HAND !

" YOUR APPEARANCE MUST'VE SPOOKED HIM INTO REALIZING THAT THINGS MIGHT BE WARMING UP ! "

HAND ME THE PHONE, FOXY, AND PUNCH IN CHANNEL D !

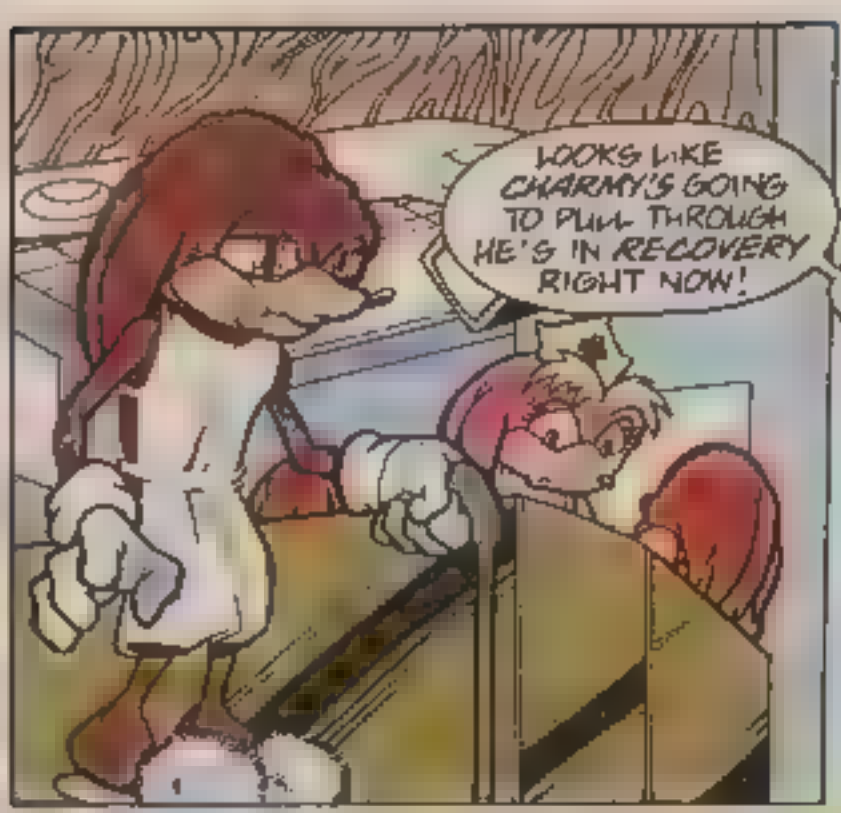
PROFESSOR, I WANT YOU TO BEGIN SHUTTING DOWN OPERATIONS AND PREPARING TO MOVE OUT !

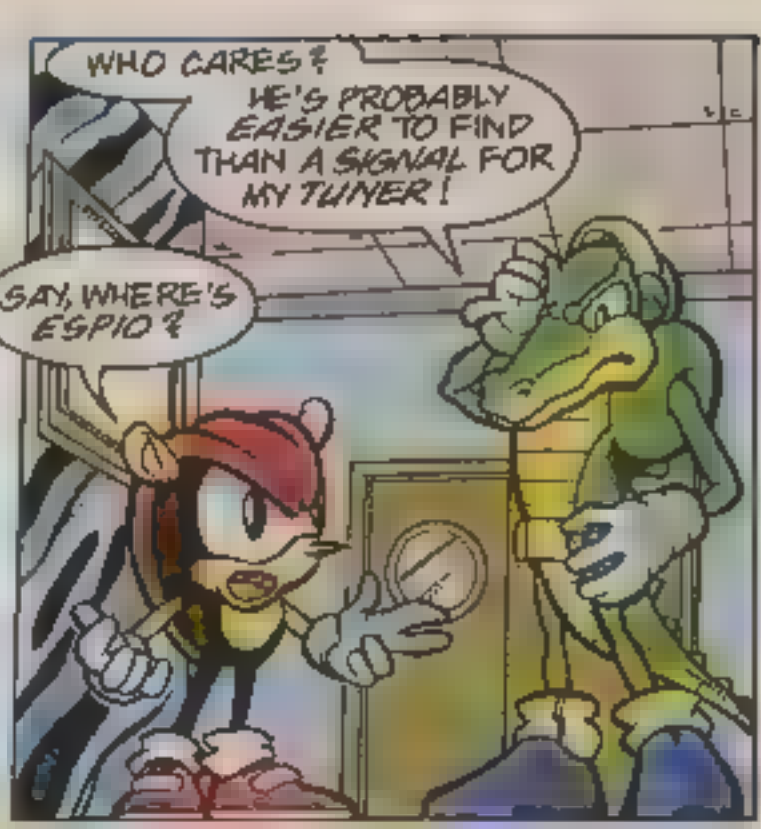
BUT ALL OUR WORK--

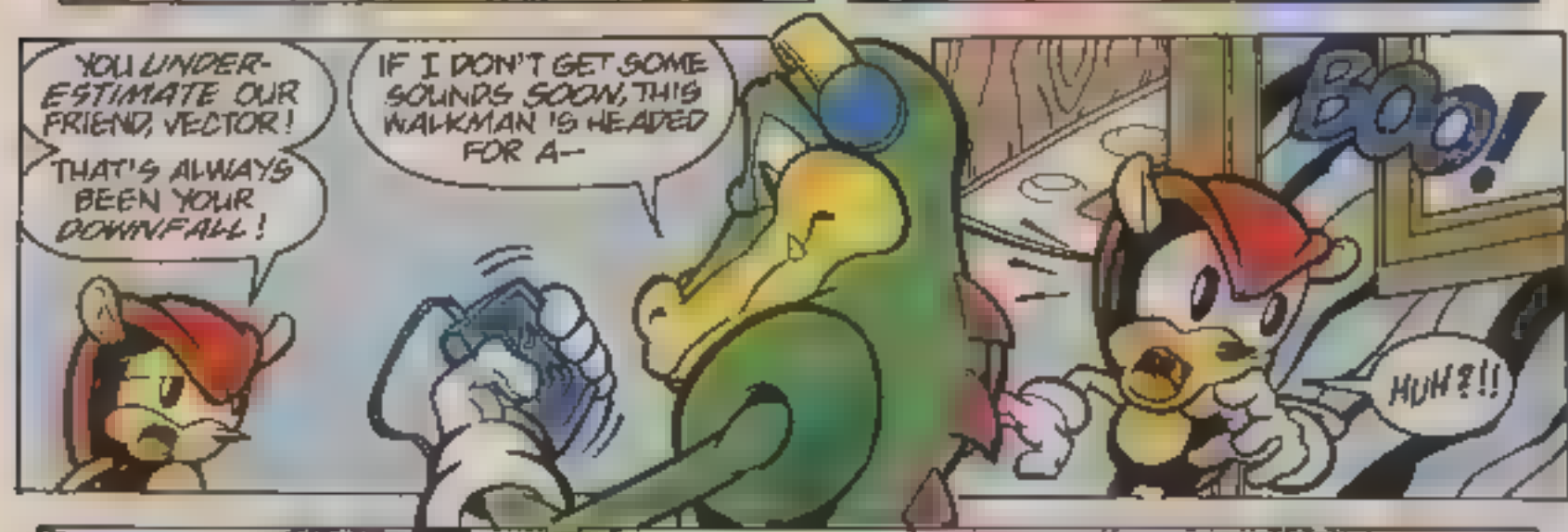
--WILL CONTINUE AFTER WE'VE LAID LOW FOR AWHILE !

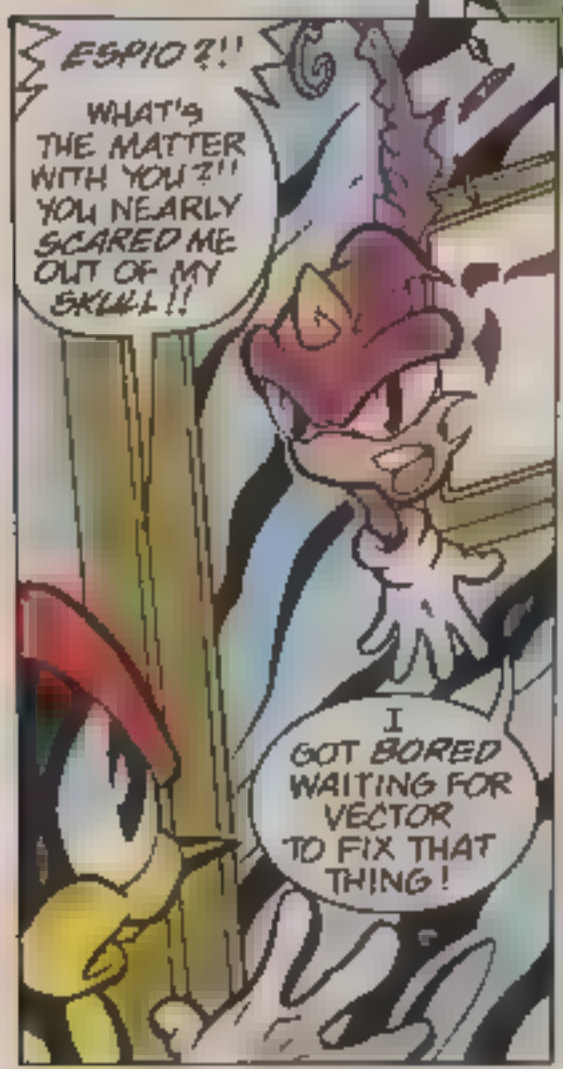
I'LL SPEAK WITH YOU FURTHER IN A FEW MINUTES ! OUT !

AXIS

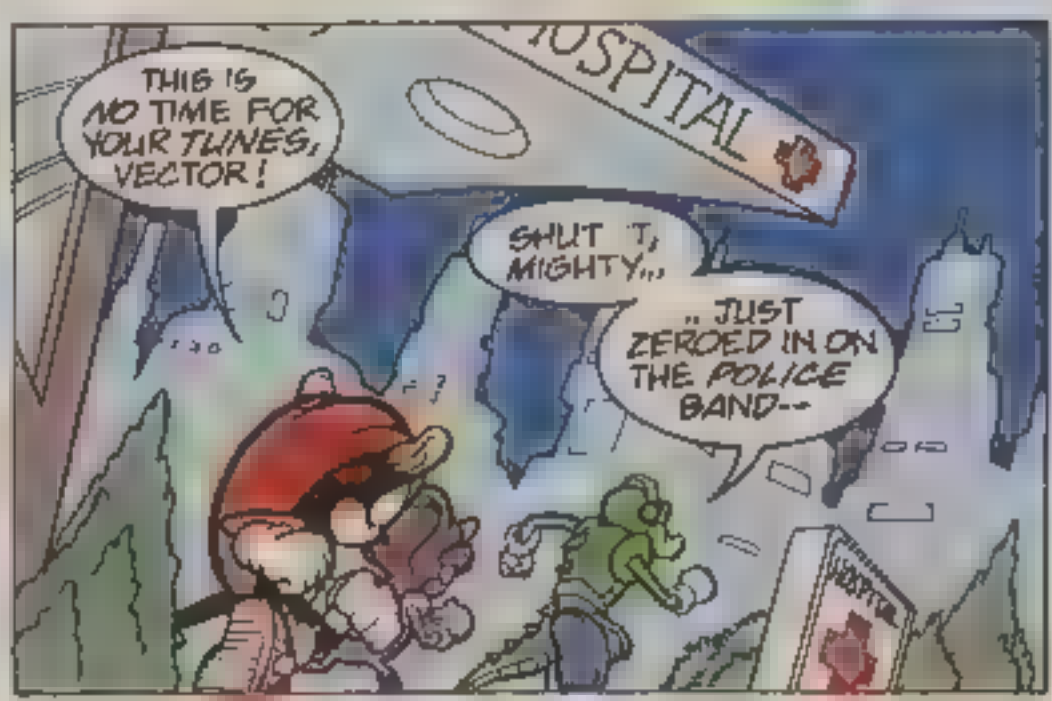

LOOKS LIKE CHARMY'S GOING TO PULL THROUGH HE'S IN RECOVERY RIGHT NOW!


WHO CARES?
HE'S PROBABLY EASIER TO FIND THAN A SIGNAL FOR MY TUNER!
SAY, WHERE'S ESPIO?


YOU UNDER-ESTIMATE OUR FRIEND, VECTOR!
THAT'S ALWAYS BEEN YOUR DOWNFALL!
IF I DON'T GET SOME SOUNDS SOON, THIS WALKMAN IS HEADED FOR A--
BOO!
HUH?!!


ESPIO?!!
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?!! YOU NEARLY SCARED ME OUT OF MY SKULL!!
I GOT BORED WAITING FOR VECTOR TO FIX THAT THING!

ESPY, M'MAN, THE WAIT IS OVER!
THE MUSIC JUST KICKED IN!


HOSPITAL
THIS IS NO TIME FOR YOUR TUNES, VECTOR!
SHUT IT, MIGHTY...
...JUST ZEROED IN ON THE POLICE BAND--

"— AND I JUST HEARD DUDLEY DO-RIGHT AND JULIE LOCKS ARE GOING MEDIEVAL IN THE SOUTH TOWNS!"

—RONRIQUE DRIVES THE BALL UP THE MIDDLE, WITH PASSLE CATCHING UP FROM BEHIND—

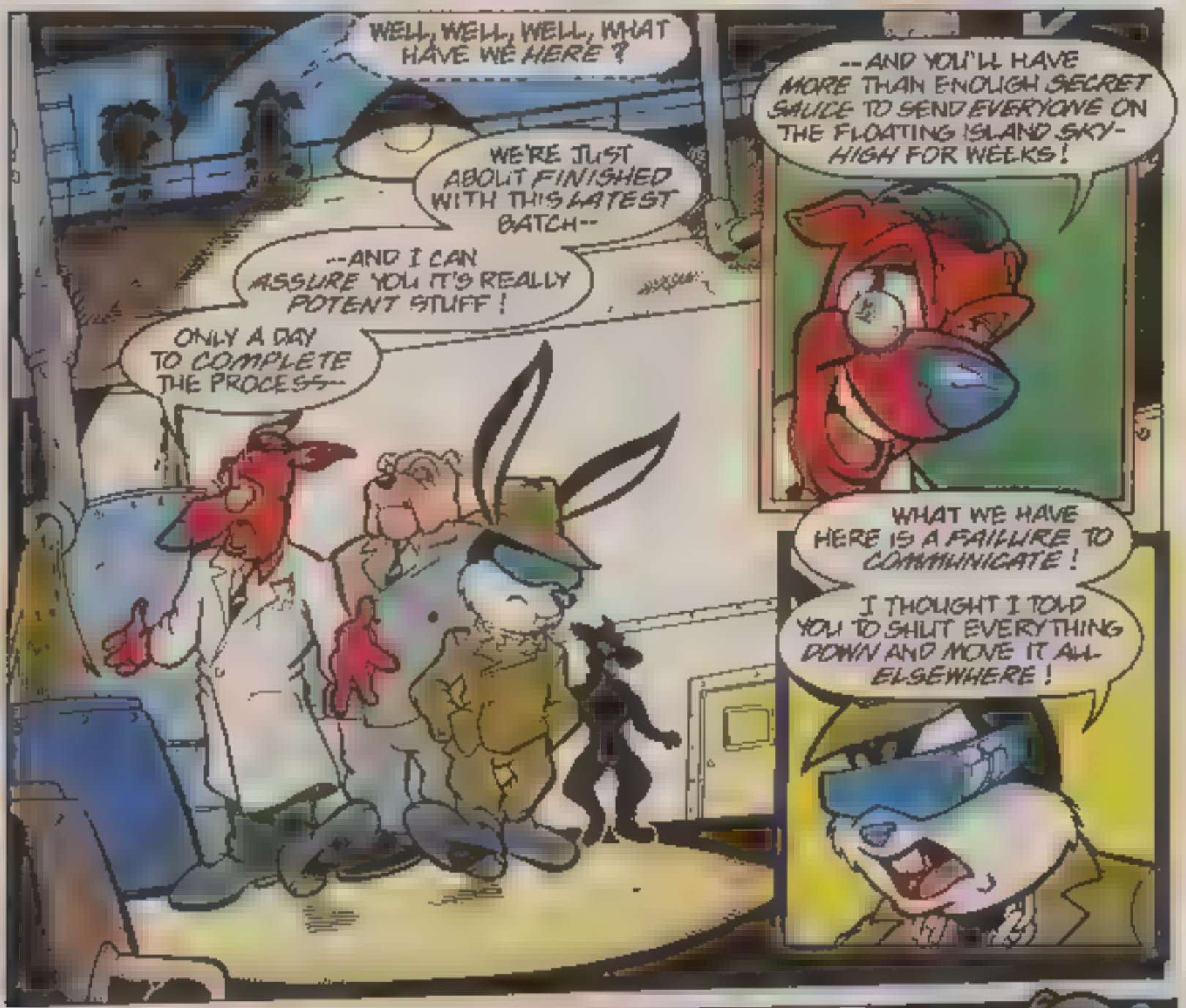
—AND HE CHECKS RONRIQUE INTO THE POST!! OH, MAN!!! WHAT A HIT!!!

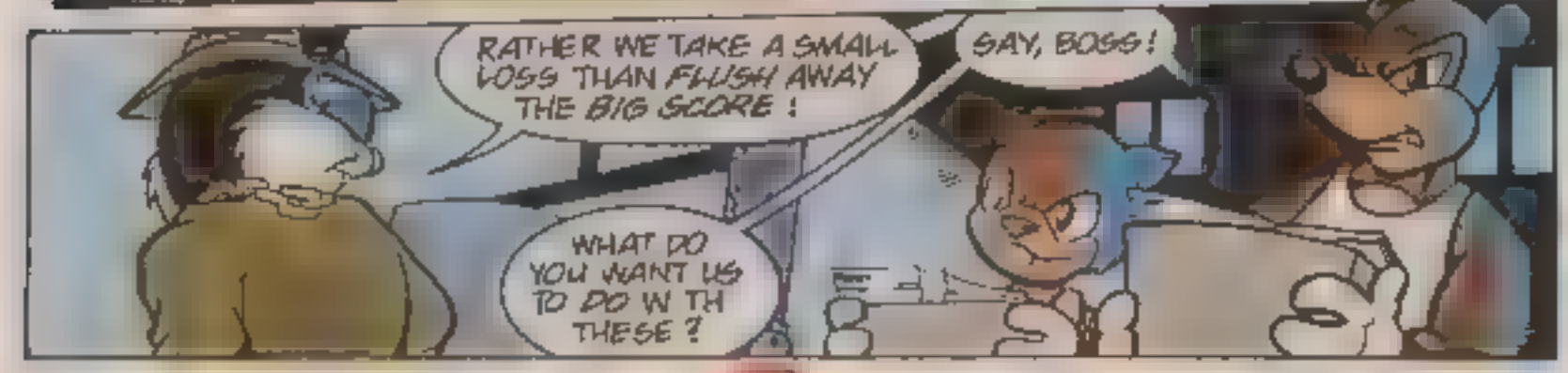
DON'T KNOW WHAT THE BOSS IS SO UPTIGHT ABOUT!

IT GETS ANY QUIETER AROUND HERE AND I'M GONNA CATCH ME SOME ZEE'S!

I HEAR YA!

WELL ?
BE CAREFUL COMING IN !
THE FIRST STEP IS A KILLER !


WELL, WELL, WELL, WHAT HAVE WE HERE ?
WE'RE JUST ABOUT FINISHED WITH THIS LATEST BATCH--
--AND I CAN ASSURE YOU IT'S REALLY POTENT STUFF !
ONLY A DAY TO COMPLETE THE PROCESS--
--AND YOU'LL HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH SECRET SAUCE TO SEND EVERYONE ON THE FLOATING ISLAND SKY-HIGH FOR WEEKS !
WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS A FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE !
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO SHUT EVERYTHING DOWN AND MOVE IT ALL ELSEWHERE !


RATHER WE TAKE A SMALL LOSS THAN FLUSH AWAY THE BIG SCORE !
SAY, BOSS !
WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO DO W TH THESE ?

"THROW'EM IN THE LIMO'S TRUNK, THEN CHECK TO SEE WHAT ELSE IS AROUND!"

END OF THE LINE, GUYS!

YOU SURE YOU HEARD REMINGTON BROADCASTING FROM AROUND HERE?

LIKE HE WAS DIALING DIRECT, MAN!

SAY, ISN'T THAT HARRY'S CAB?

WHAT WOULD HE BE DOING HERE?

WHY DON'T WE ASK HIM?

YOU FELLERS SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN TO SNEAK UP ON A BLOKE!

SOMEONE COULD'VE GOTTEN HURT-- OR WORSE!

YOU MADE YOUR POINT!

TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, I DROVE YOUR FRIENDS HERE!

THEY WENT INSIDE THAT CHEMICAL PLANT ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES AGO--

--AND NOBODY'S COME OUT SINCE!

GUESS I'LL SCOPE THINGS OUT FOR MYSELF THEN!

NOT WITHOUT US, YOU WON'T!

HEY, FELLAS--

" -JUST BE CAREFUL IN THERE!"

MISTER HARE! PLEASE! LET ME FINISH MY WORK -

IXNAY, MAX! I'M NOT DOING HARD TIME BECAUSE OF YOUR BAD JUDGMENT!

LET'S SHUT IT DOWN, BLACKJACK!

KLUNG!

HEY!!

SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE'S ALREADY NOSING AROUND WHERE THEY DON'T BELONG!

BETTER COME OUT, WHOEVER YOU ARE!

YOU CAN EITHER DIE EASY, OR DIE HARD!

AND I GUARANTEE YOU, WHEN I SAY HARD--

--I MEAN HARD!

SLAAM!

OOOF!

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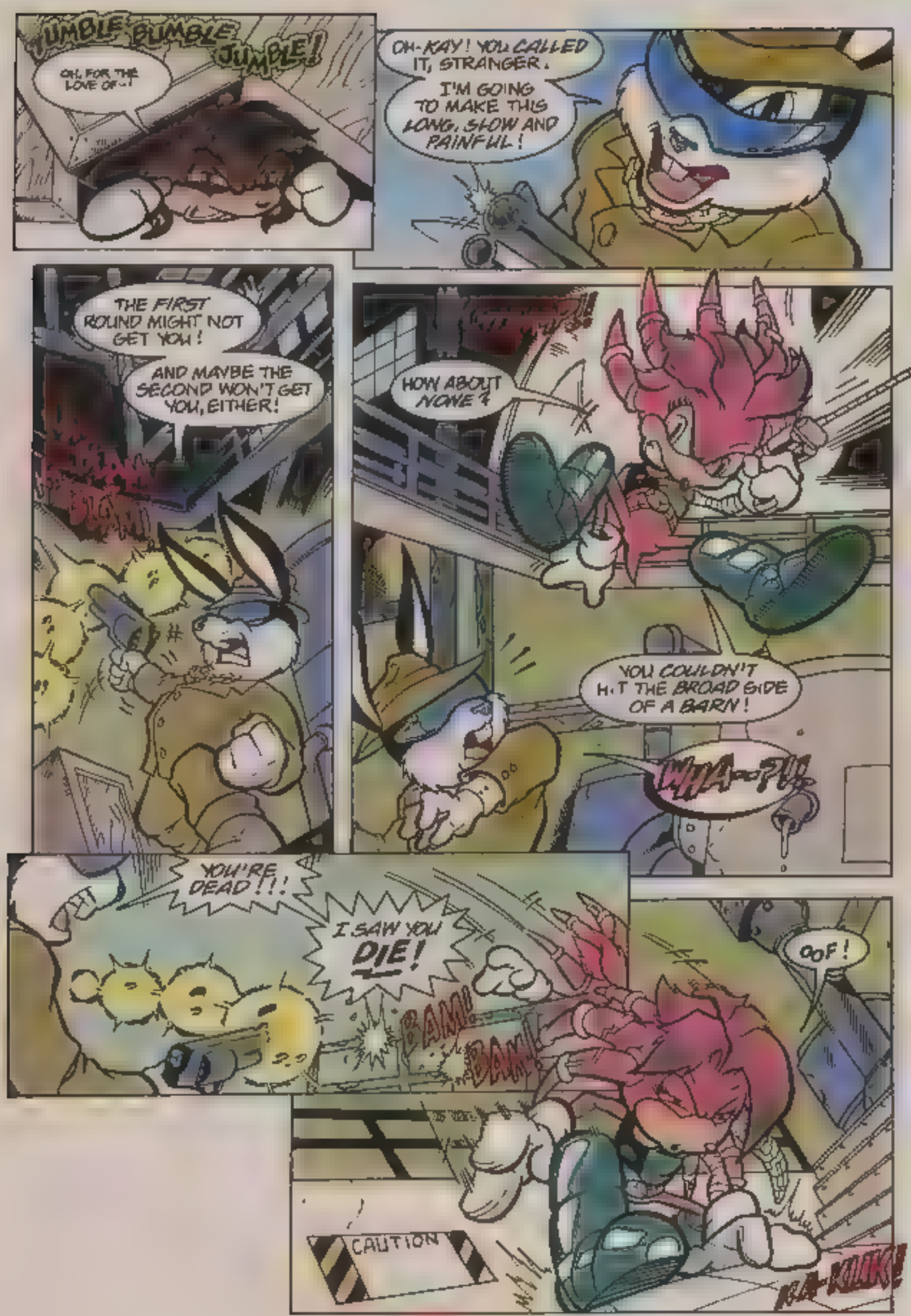

JUMBLE BUMBLE JUMBLE!
OH, FOR THE LOVE OF...!
OH-KAY! YOU CALLED IT, STRANGER.
I'M GOING TO MAKE THIS LONG, SLOW AND PAINFUL!
THE FIRST ROUND MIGHT NOT GET YOU!
AND MAYBE THE SECOND WON'T GET YOU, EITHER!
HOW ABOUT NONE?
YOU COULDN'T HIT THE BROAD SIDE OF A BARN!
WHA--?!
YOU'RE DEAD!!!
I SAW YOU DIE!
BAM!
BAM!
OOF!
CAUTION
KLUNK!

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU SURVIVED A 20-STORY FALL--

--BUT I'M WILLING TO LAY ODDS YOU DON'T WALK AWAY FROM THIS!

AREN'T YOU BEING A TAD RADICAL?

RADICAL?!

I'LL SHOW YOU RADICAL, BABE!

CAUTION

KA-BLAM!

YOW!

NO! ALLOW ME TO DEMONSTRATE!

A CHAMELEON!

AREN'T YOU OUT OF YOUR ELEMENT?

YEAH! I'M NORMALLY NOT ONE TO HANG OUT WITH SLIME LIKE YOU!

BOK!

YOU ALL RIGHT, JULIE-SU?

NEVER MIND ME!

I WANT TO KNOW IF THE CONSTABLE IS ALL RIGHT!

"I THOUGHT I SAW H.M IN TROUBLE!"

A LAWMAN, EH?

I EAT GUYS LIKE YOU FOR BREAKFAST!

YOU DON'T SAY.

HUH?

AS FOR YOU BEING MY IDEA OF BREAKFAST—

—MAN, YOU'RE THE PITS!

BUMBLE BUMBLE

AND THAT'S THE FACT, JACK!

...OOOH...

I'VE GOTTA GET OUTTA 'HEAH'!

IT AIN'T SAFE FOR A 'GOIL'!

CUTTIN' OUT ON US, HUH?

LEMME GO, YA JOIK!
I DON'T THINK SO! VECTOR DON'T PLAY THAT!
"HOW D YOU LIKE TO BOOGIE WITH THE CONSTABLE INSTEAD?"
WHREE-WHREE-WHREE
E.S.T.
SO THIS IS IT, CONSTABLE? ALL THE SECRET SAUCE WITH THE LEMON SUNDROP DANDELION SEASONING HAS BEEN CONFISCATED ALONG WITH THE BAD GUYS?
HARD TO BELIEVE ANYTHING LIKE THIS COULD HAPPEN IN ECHIDNAOPOLIS!
NOT REALLY! THERE ARE ALWAYS PREDATORS IN EVERY SOCIETY! THAT'S WHY WE MUST BE EVER VIGILANT!
NOT QUITE, JULIE SU-
SOMEONE GET ME A LAWYER!
I'M GONNA SUE FOR FALSE ARREST!
"--THERE'S JUST ONE LOOSE END TO TAKE CARE OF!"
YOU'RE KILLING ME, CONSTABLE!
SALES WILL NOSEDIVE WITHOUT THAT SAUCE!
I COULD ALWAYS BOOK YOU AS AN ACCESSORY AFTER THE FACT, IF YOU PREFER!
ON SECOND THOUGHT, GOOD OL' KETCHUP AND MUSTARD WILL DO IN A PINCH!

" SOMEHOW, I KNEW YOU WERE AN AGREEABLE CHAP, MISTER RODENT!"

I DON'T LIKE THIS, LOCKE!

KNUCKLES IS EXHIBITING POWER BEYOND ANYTHING HE SHOULD BE CAPABLE OF!

THOUGH THAT'S TRUE.. PERHAPS HE'S ABLE TO CHANNEL THE ENERGIES OF THE CHAOS EMERALD IN A WAY MUCH MORE INTENSE THAN WE'D EXPECT!

" I'M NOT SO SURE KNUCKLES IS SIMPLY CHANNELING, LOCKE."

HOME!

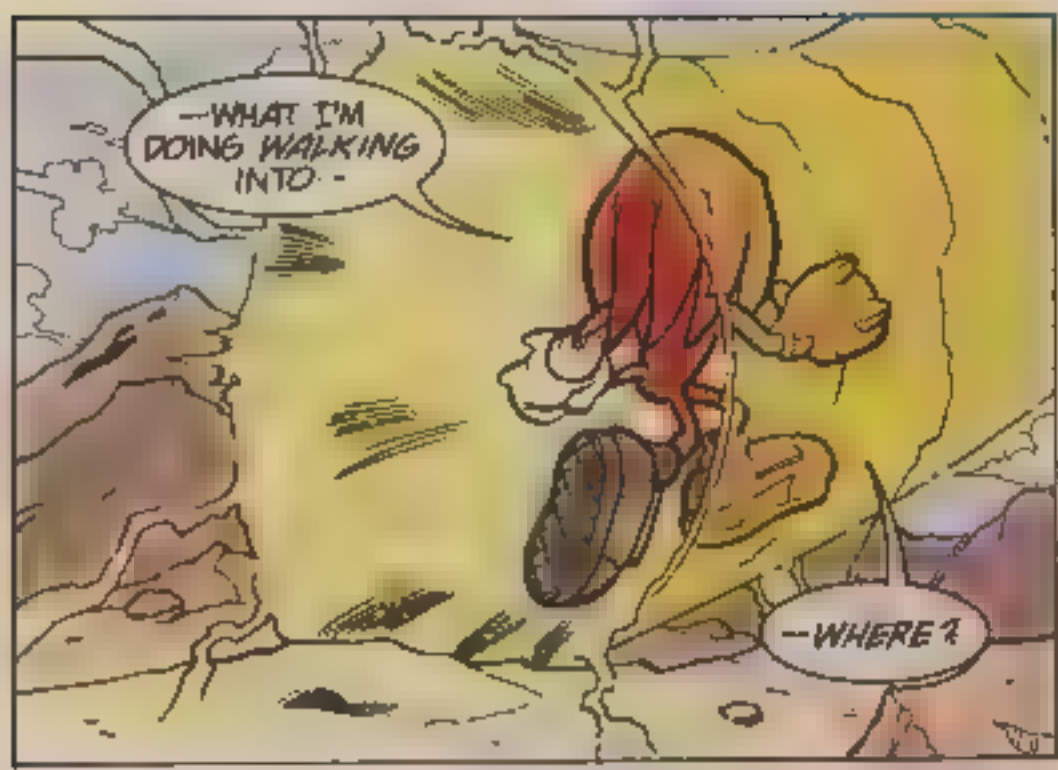
ALL I WANT TO DO IS JUST GO HOME!

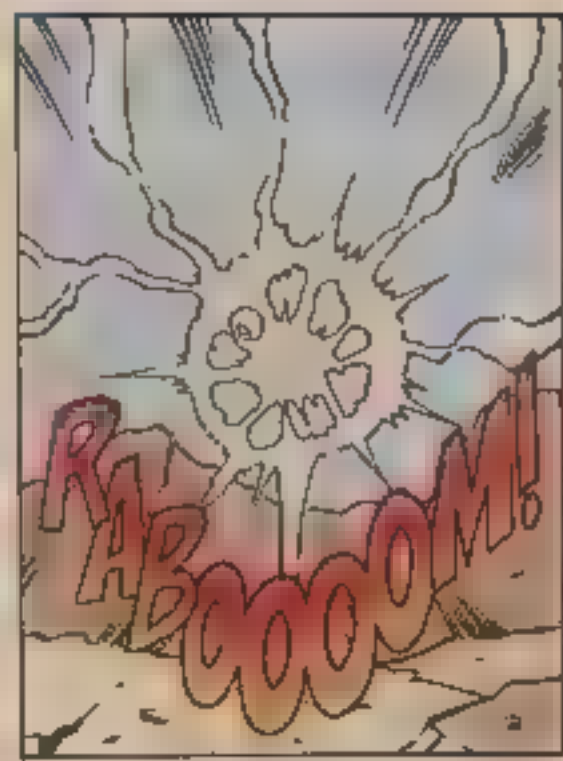
WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT!

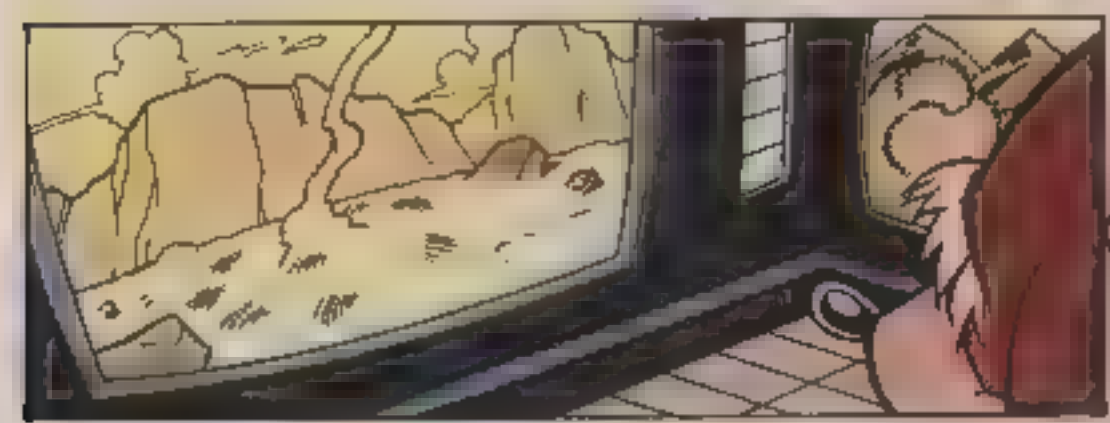
I KNOW THIS SOUNDS CRAZY--

--BUT IT FEELS LIKE IT'S CALLING OUT TO ME!

I MUST BE NUTS! HOW ELSE CAN I EXPLAIN--







THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS GUARDIANS CAN ACHIEVE WHEN THEY LEARN TO HARNESS THE ENERGY OF THE CHAOS EMERALD LOCKE--

--AND WHAT WE'VE JUST WITNESSED IS UNLIKE ANYTHING I'VE EVER EXPERIENCED!

WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE WE DO, FATHER?

IN MY OPINION, I BELIEVE THIS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED BEFORE THE FULL BROTHERHOOD!

KNUCKLES HASN'T DEMONSTRATED MALICIOUS INTENT, FATHER!

NO, BUT HE IS DISPLAYING POWER SIMILAR TO DIMITRI'S--

"--AND THAT ALONE GIVES ME PAUSE FOR CONCERN!"

GOLDENHIVE COLONY NOW COMING INTO VIEW STRAIGHT AHEAD!

HOW ARE YOU FEELING, CHARMY?

EST

STILL A BIT WOOZY FROM SURGERY, JULIE-SU--

--BUT OTHERWISE, I'M FINE!

MAMA! LOOK! IT'S CHARMY!!

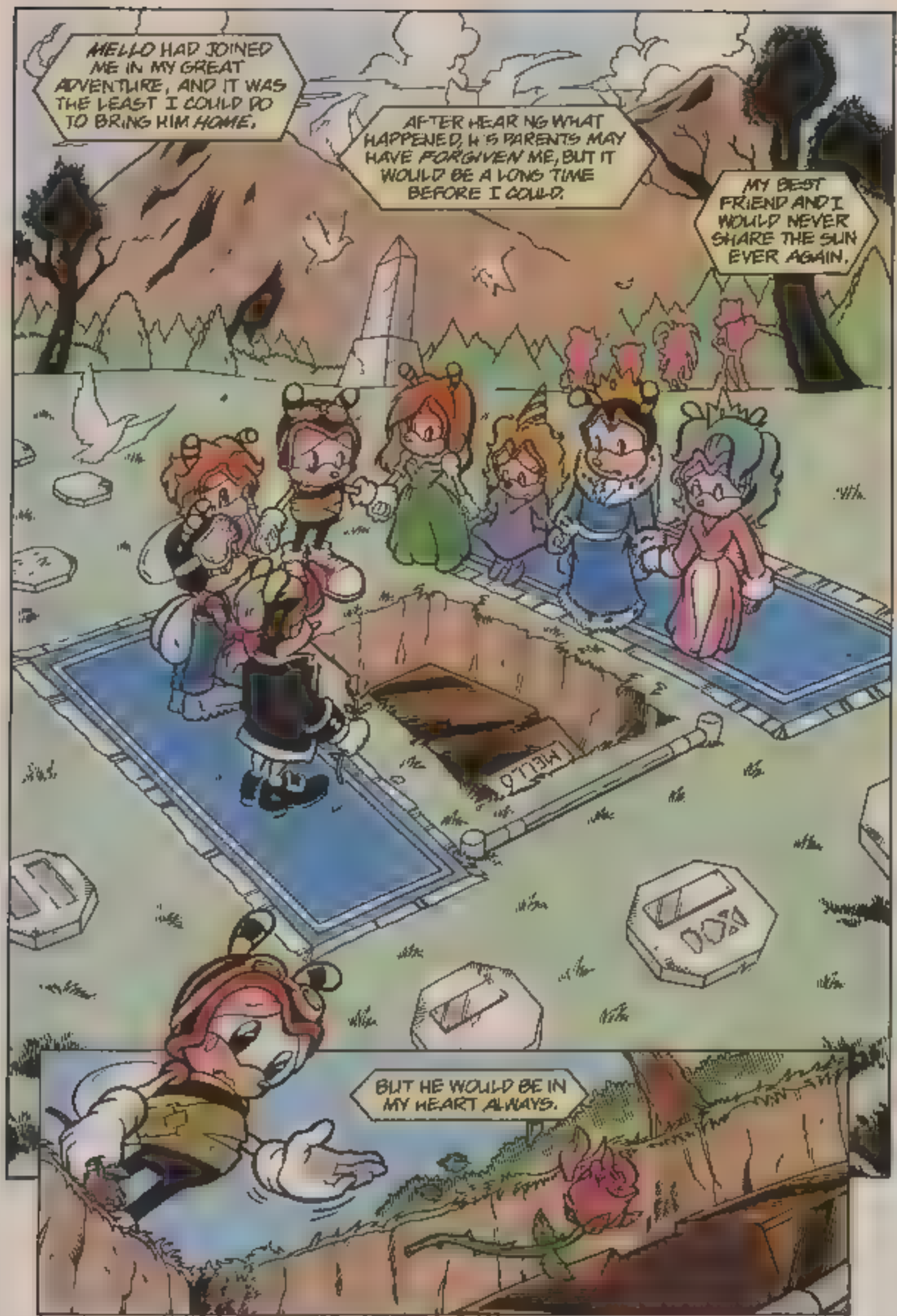
AND HE'S BROUGHT SOME FRIENDS!

HELLO, MOTHER!

FATHER!

YOU'RE LOOKING WELL, CHARMY! IT'S GOOD TO HAVE YOU HOME!

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, PLEASE, THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO DO FIRST!


MELLO HAD JOINED ME IN MY GREAT ADVENTURE, AND IT WAS THE LEAST I COULD DO TO BRING HIM HOME.
AFTER HEARING WHAT HAPPENED, HIS PARENTS MAY HAVE FORGIVEN ME, BUT IT WOULD BE A LONG TIME BEFORE I COULD.
MY BEST FRIEND AND I WOULD NEVER SHARE THE SUN EVER AGAIN.
MELLO
BUT HE WOULD BE IN MY HEART ALWAYS.

AS WOULD MY OTHER FRIENDS WHO CAME TO MEAN SO MUCH TO ME

THANKS FOR COMING, GUYS

--I DON'T THINK I'D HAVE GOTTEN THROUGH THAT WITHOUT YOU!

THAT'S WHAT BUDS ARE FOR, Y'KNOW

I DIDN'T THINK THIS WOULD BE SO HARD, BUT AFTER TOMORROW--

--I GUESS IT'S GOODBYE!

PLAY TIME IS OVER!

JULIE-SU'S RIGHT, CHARM! YOU TAKE CARE, Y'HEAR?

IT'S NOT FOREVER, CHARMY!

WHO KNOWS WHAT THE FUTURE WILL BRING!

Y'KNOW, I'M GONNA MISS THE LITTLE FELLER!

AT LEAST HE WASN'T AS OBNOXIOUS AS SOME CROCS I KNOW!

CONSIDERING WHAT AWAITS OUR FRIEND--

"--TOMORROW IS NOT JUST ANOTHER DAY"

ARE YOU READY, CHARMY?

I HAD LEFT HOME NOT WANTING TO GROW UP, ONLY TO LEARN THAT I HAD NO CHOICE IN THE MATTER.

I THOUGHT I WOULD ALWAYS HAVE FUN WITH MY FRIENDS, AND FOUND IN MY FAMILY SOMETHING MORE MEANINGFUL INSTEAD.

FUNNY HOW THINGS WORK OUT IN THE END.

NEXT:

REUNIONS!

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REUNIONS

KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA #16 ON SALE JULY 1998!

Next month: Knuckles *finally returns to* **The Floating Island**, *only to discover things haven't remained the same at home. Along with a surprise from his mother, the secrets of* **Haven** *begin to unfold as* **The Brotherhood of Guardians** *gathers to determine what's to become of Knuckles now that he's displaying power beyond his capabilities. Written by* **Ken Penders** *with art by* **Manny Galan** *and* **Andrew Pepoy**. **KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA #16 on sale July 1998!**

NIGHTS INTO DREAMS #4 ON SALE JUNE 1998!

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Freddy

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